

are new weather conditions and it is changing every year and it is not getting better. It is getting dryer and hotter.

So when Joe Biden starts talking about the next generation of energy in America, I think about my granddaughter, "Little Jo." I think about Jo, and I am wondering what kind of world she is going to live in and what I am going to do about it.

One thing that President Biden said was, we are moving toward electric vehicles. You would think that it was some Federal mandate that is bringing this on. But if you read the newspapers, you know it isn't. General Motors has accelerated the timetable to go to electric vehicles, Ford as well. They see the writing on the wall.

What we currently use for transportation will not be what we use in 10 or 15 years. It is going to change. We are going to move to electric vehicles for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is there are fewer emissions, greenhouse gas emissions.

The country of Norway just announced last week that over 50 percent of their vehicles are electric vehicles. If you had been there in the recent past, you see Teslas in every direction, electric vehicles in every direction.

I spoke to the Ambassador from Norway, and I said: How did that happen? How did you move to a point where more than half the vehicles in Norway are electric vehicles?

She said: Tax breaks. We gave them tax breaks. And all of a sudden, everyone had a new lifestyle with electric vehicles. And they think that protects them in the future or at least holds the possibility of reducing the pollution that they are dealing with, and I think they are right. So does Joe Biden. But when we get into an infrastructure debate with Republicans, the first thing they say is: Take electric vehicles off the table. We don't want to even talk about it. No subsidies, no encouragement for those.

Traditionally, we have been encouraging oil companies, with all sorts of tax breaks throughout their history, to continue to explore and grow in size and make a lot of money. But the notion of encouraging electric vehicles is somehow heretical to our friends on the Republican side. I think it is very shortsighted.

I think we should look at the obvious. I tell this story, and it is worth repeating. Six years ago, we had an auto plant in Normal, IL—yes, that is the name of it: Normal, IL. Six years ago, Mitsubishi closed their auto plant. There were more than 1,000 people working there, and there was that big sprawling complex just off of Interstate 55. Every time you took that interstate and looked out there, you thought: That is going to be there forever. That building is just going to deteriorate and be there forever.

Well, guess what. A year after they closed, the mayor of Normal, IL, whose name is Chris Koos—a wonderful

mayor—called me and said: Senator, I think I have a buyer for the Mitsubishi plant.

I said: What kind of buyer?

He said: There is a man who wants to build electric vehicles. He came down and took a look, and he liked that plant. He said it was way too big for his purposes, but he is actually thinking of building electric vehicles in the old Mitsubishi plant.

Darned if it didn't happen. The company is called Rivian. They bought that plant, and they started building electric vehicles—just this month, officially, in production.

How many workers will they have? Up to 4,000, maybe even 5,000. Will they be able to use the whole plant? They are now building an addition to the plant. Is it a viable company? Is it going to last? Well, obviously Amazon thinks so because they have invested a billion dollars in Rivian. And the companies are coming from all around thinking this is the future.

So I say to the Senator from Kentucky, yes, there will be transitions in jobs, but there are job opportunities at Rivian and places just like that. Lion Electric is another company. It came in from Canada. They build electric buses. One of the things we are envisioning is moving toward electric schoolbuses across America. That is a big move. This is a company that builds them.

We need more just like it, and there are going to be good-paying jobs associated with it.

EVBox is a company out of the Netherlands, located in my State again. They build the charging stations.

Closing your eyes to the opportunities here is very shortsighted. Things are changing, and changing for the better. And because there is change, it doesn't mean it is bad for everybody. There are transitions, and we ought to help with educating people, preparing them for the new jobs.

But if you look around at this world and what is happening with the weather patterns and the environment, how shortsighted it would be for us to say to our kids and grandkids: Well, we had a chance back in 2021 to do something about it, but we decided it just might make people uneasy to think about that much change.

Well, I feel uneasy about the change that is coming if we do nothing. It is going to be a dramatic change for the worse for our kids.

#### VLADIMIR PUTIN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, on another topic, this notion that Joe Biden is being pushed around by Vladimir Putin—the Senator who made that statement on the floor, or one just like it, has he ignored what happened over the last 4 years?

Every time the President of the United States, Donald Trump, would meet with Vladimir Putin, they would ask the translators to leave the room,

the people from the intelligence agencies to leave the room, and they would just play pat-a-cake. I mean, we know what was going on there. There was some sort of political bromance between the President and Vladimir Putin.

I don't believe that is ever going to happen with Joe Biden. He is a realist. He made it clear that he went in that meeting with Putin to lay down the law in terms of infiltrating our elections in the future and the activities that we have seen in hacking and cyber crimes.

That is the kind of leadership we need in dealing with Vladimir Putin.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today I want to speak about two really highly qualified judicial nominees the Senate Judiciary Committee came up with through the White House.

The first is Candace Jackson-Akiwumi, who has been nominated to an Illinois seat on the Seventh Circuit. With her qualifications, temperament, and range of experience, she is outstanding.

She is the daughter of two judges. Her father, Raymond Jackson, is a Federal district court judge, and her mother, Gwendolyn Jones Jackson, is a retired State court judge.

She went to Princeton and then Yale Law School—not bad. She clerked for Judge David Coar on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District and for Roger Gregory on the Fourth Circuit.

After her clerkships, she worked in private practice, and then she made an interesting career decision, and not many people make it. She decided to stop practicing in the private practice of law and become a staff attorney at the Federal Defender Program for the Northern District of Illinois, representing people who couldn't afford counsel.

Ms. Jackson-Akiwumi spent 10 years as a Federal public defender. She defended hundreds of indigent clients at every stage of the legal process. She is a real lawyer. She knows that courtroom inside and out, and she knows the legal process as well.

Ms. Jackson-Akiwumi's experience and perspective on the criminal justice system will be an asset in the Seventh Circuit. If she is approved, she will be the second woman of color to be in that circuit. It is about time.

Her skills and legal expertise will be invaluable. She received a "well qualified" rating by the ABA.

She has a great temperament. One of our Senators on the Judiciary Committee tried to trap her with a question, seeing just whether she knew enough about the law. When it was all over, I think he was satisfied that she did.

She spoke to the fact that her mother taught her how important it is for judges to listen and for litigants to be heard. This is a fundamental principle